



# STATE OF WISCONSIN Senate Journal

## One-Hundred and Second Regular Session

2:15 P.M.

TUESDAY, February 3, 2015

The Senate met.

The Senate was called to order by Senate President Lazich.

### CALL OF ROLL

The roll was called, disclosing the presence of a quorum.

Pursuant to Senate Rule 15, the official attendance for session was:

Senators Bewley, Carpenter, Cowles, Erpenbach, Farrow, S. Fitzgerald, Gudex, Hansen, Harris Dodd, Harsdorf, Lasee, Lassa, Lazich, LeMahieu, Marklein, Miller, Moulton, Nass, Olsen, Petrowski, Ringhand, Risser, Roth, Shilling, L. Taylor, Tiffany, Vinehout, Vukmir, Wanggaard and Wirch - 30.

Absent with leave - Senators Darling and C. Larson - 2.  
Vacancies - 20th Senate District - 1.

The Senate stood for a moment of silent meditation.

The Senate remained standing and Senator Ringhand led the Senate in the pledge of allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

### LEAVES OF ABSENCE

Senator Fitzgerald, with unanimous consent, asked that Senator Darling be granted a leave of absence for today's session.

Senator Shilling, with unanimous consent, asked that Senator Larson be granted a leave of absence for today's session.

Pursuant to Senate Rule 17 (6), the Chief Clerk makes the following entries under the above date.

### INTRODUCTION, FIRST READING, AND REFERENCE OF PROPOSALS

Read and referred:

#### Senate Joint Resolution 8

Relating to: commending Andy Dean, Sara Dean, Troy Thomas, Dean Bogdonovich, and Bob Wilke for life-saving actions.

By Senator Moulton; cosponsored by Representatives Kulp and Bernier.

To committee on **Senate Organization**.

#### Senate Joint Resolution 9

Relating to: proclaiming May 15, 16, and 17, 2015, Syttende Mai Weekend.

By Senators Miller, Shilling, Harsdorf, Hansen, Vinehout, Erpenbach, Lassa, Risser, Wirch, Ringhand, Harris Dodd, Olsen, L. Taylor and Bewley; cosponsored by Representatives Hebl, Nerison, Allen, Brostoff, Danou, Hesselbein, Hintz, Horlacher, Jorgensen, Knudson, Milroy, Murtha, Ohnstad, Pope, Sargent, Sinicki, Subeck and Zamarripa.

To committee on **Senate Organization**.

#### Senate Joint Resolution 10

Relating to: proclaiming Friday, February 6, 2015, to be National Wear Red Day in recognition of heart disease awareness and prevention.

By Senators Darling, Shilling, Bewley, Cowles, Erpenbach, Gudex, Harris Dodd, Harsdorf, C. Larson, Lassa, Moulton, Nass, Olsen, Ringhand, L. Taylor, Vinehout and Wanggaard; cosponsored by Representatives Loudeneck, Ballweg, Berceau, Bernier, Billings, E. Brooks, R. Brooks, Considine, Czaja, Goyke, Horlacher, Johnson, Kahl, Kerkman, Knodl, Kolste, Krug, Meyers, Mursau, Ohnstad, A. Ott, Petryk, Pope, Rodriguez, Sargent, Sinicki, Spreitzer, Subeck, Thiesfeldt, Tittl, Tranel, VanderMeer, Wachs and Zamarripa.

To committee on **Senate Organization**.

#### Senate Bill 16

Relating to: taste samples of intoxicating liquor provided on certain retail licensed premises.

By Senators Moulton, L. Taylor, Erpenbach, Gudex and Vinehout; cosponsored by Representatives Kleefisch, Zamarripa, August, Allen, Ballweg, Brandtjen, Brostoff, Considine, Danou, Goyke, Kahl, Kitchens, Kooyenga, Kremer, Krug, Kuglitsch, Meyers, Milroy, Ohnstad, Sinicki, Spiros, Steffen, C. Taylor and Thiesfeldt.

To committee on **Agriculture, Small Business, and Tourism**.

Read first time and referred:

#### Senate Bill 17

Relating to: continuing education program sponsors for chiropractors, chiropractic technicians, and chiropractic radiological technicians.

By Senators Petrowski, Nass, Olsen, L. Taylor and Moulton; cosponsored by Representatives Kooyenga, Czaja, Spiros, Steffen, Allen, Ripp, Rohrkaste, Tittl, Gannon, A. Ott, Macco, Danou, Petryk, Kleefisch, Knodl, Kremer, E. Brooks, Doyle, C. Taylor, R. Brooks, Mursau, Kuglitsch, Nerison, Krug and Hutton.

To committee on **Health and Human Services**.

#### **Senate Bill 18**

Relating to: the manufacture, sale, and distribution of products containing microbeads and providing a penalty.

By Senators Wirch, L. Taylor, Carpenter, Erpenbach, Harris Dodd, Hansen, C. Larson, Lassa, Miller, Risser, Bewley, Vinehout, Shilling and Ringhand; cosponsored by Representatives Ohnstad, Barnes, Barca, Berceau, Brostoff, Considine, Danou, Doyle, Goyke, Hesselbein, Hintz, Johnson, Kolste, Meyers, Milroy, Mason, Pope, Sargent, Sinicki, Subeck, Spreitzer, Stuck, C. Taylor, Zamarripa, Hebl, Kessler, Wachs, Young, Billings, Zepnick, Shankland, Genrich, Jorgensen, Kahl, Bowen and Riemer.

To committee on **Natural Resources and Energy**.

#### **Senate Bill 19**

Relating to: designating a lay caregiver during a hospital admission.

By Senators Carpenter, Lassa, Wirch, L. Taylor, Harris Dodd and Hansen; cosponsored by Representatives Berceau, Sinicki, Milroy, Zamarripa, Subeck, Billings, Sargent, Kahl, Bowen and Meyers.

To committee on **Health and Human Services**.

#### **Senate Bill 20**

Relating to: transfer of certain fish and game approvals to persons with disabilities and the transfer of Class A bear licenses to persons awarded the Purple Heart or serving on active duty in the U.S. armed forces.

By Senator Roth; cosponsored by Representative Jacque.

To committee on **Natural Resources and Energy**.

#### **Senate Bill 21**

Relating to: state finances and appropriations, constituting the executive budget act of the 2015 legislature.

By joint committee on **Finance**

To joint committee on **Finance**.

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### **PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

Pursuant to Senate Rule 17 (5). Senator Vinehout added as a coauthor of **Senate Joint Resolution 5**.

Pursuant to Senate Rule 17 (5), Senator Roth added as a coauthor of **Senate Joint Resolution 7**.

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#### **State of Wisconsin Office of the Governor**

February 3, 2015

The Honorable, the Senate:

This letter is to remove the following appointment from consideration for confirmation by the Wisconsin Senate:

**STEINKE, LINDA** of Janesville, as a Certified Residential Appraiser on the Real Estate Appraisers Board, to serve for the term ending May 1, 2018.

Respectfully Submitted,

**SCOTT WALKER**

Governor

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### **ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE SENATE**

Senator Fitzgerald, with unanimous consent, asked that all appointments, with the exception of John Scocos and Cathy Stepp, be taken up en masse.

**ANDERSON, SECRETARY ELOISE** of Madison, as Secretary of the Department of Children and Families, to serve for the term ending at the pleasure of the Governor.

**BILDSTEN, SECRETARY PETER** of Madison, as Secretary of the Department of Financial Institutions, to serve for the term ending at the pleasure of the Governor.

**BRANCEL, SECRETARY BEN** of Madison, as Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, to serve for the term ending at the pleasure of the Governor.

**CHANDLER, SECRETARY RICK** of Madison, as Secretary of the Department of Revenue, to serve for the term ending at the pleasure of the Governor.

**GARY, GEORGE** of Milwaukee, as a Savings and loan experience on the Savings Institutions Review Board, to serve for the term ending May 1, 2019.

**GOTTLIEB, SECRETARY MARK** of Madison, as Secretary of the Department of Transportation, to serve for the term ending at the pleasure of the Governor.

**HALL, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER REED** of Madison, as Chief Executive Officer of the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, to serve for the term ending at the pleasure of the Governor.

**HANSON, GAIL** of Oconomowoc, as a Public Member 5 on the Deferred Compensation Board, to serve for the term ending July 1, 2018.

**HUEBSCH, SECRETARY MICHAEL** of Madison, as Secretary of the Department of Administration, to serve for the term ending at the pleasure of the Governor.

**KLETT, SECRETARY STEPHANIE** of Madison, as Secretary of the Department of Tourism, to serve for the term ending at the pleasure of the Governor.

**MAIN, EDWARD D.** of Madison, as a Public Member 2 on the Deferred Compensation Board, to serve for the term ending July 1, 2016.

**NEWSON, SECRETARY REGGIE J.** of Madison, as Secretary of the Department of Workforce Development, to serve for the term ending at the pleasure of the Governor.

**NICKEL, TED** of Madison, as Commissioner of the Office of the Commissioner of Insurance, to serve for the term ending at the pleasure of the Governor.

**OLSON, JAMES** of Appleton, as a 5+ years of experience 3 on the Savings Institutions Review Board, to serve for the term ending May 1, 2019.

**RHOADES, SECRETARY KITTY** of Madison, as Secretary of the Department of Health Services, to serve for the term ending at the pleasure of the Governor.

**ROSS, SECRETARY DAVE** of Madison, as Secretary of the Department of Safety and Professional Services, to serve for the term ending at the pleasure of the Governor.

**ZIMMERMAN, ARTHUR** of Madison, as a Public Member 4 on the Deferred Compensation Board, to serve for the term ending July 1, 2017.

The question was: Confirmation en masse?

The ayes and noes were required and the vote was: ayes, 30; noes, 0; absent or not voting, 2; as follows:

Ayes - Senators Bewley, Carpenter, Cowles, Erpenbach, Farrow, S. Fitzgerald, Gudex, Hansen, Harris Dodd, Harsdorf, Lasee, Lassa, Lazich, LeMahieu, Marklein, Miller, Moulton, Nass, Olsen, Petrowski, Ringhand, Risser, Roth, Shilling, L. Taylor, Tiffany, Vinehout, Vukmir, Wanggaard and Wirch - 30.

Noes - None.

Absent or not voting - Senators Darling and C. Larson - 2.

Confirmed.

#### **SCOCOS, SECRETARY JOHN**

Of Madison, as Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs, to serve for the term ending at the pleasure of the Governor.

The question was: Confirmation?

The ayes and noes were required and the vote was: ayes, 29; noes, 1; absent or not voting, 2; as follows:

Ayes - Senators Bewley, Carpenter, Cowles, Erpenbach, Farrow, S. Fitzgerald, Gudex, Hansen, Harris Dodd, Harsdorf, Lasee, Lazich, LeMahieu, Marklein, Miller, Moulton, Nass, Olsen, Petrowski, Ringhand, Risser, Roth, Shilling, L. Taylor, Tiffany, Vinehout, Vukmir, Wanggaard and Wirch - 29.

Noes - Senator Lassa - 1.

Absent or not voting - Senators Darling and C. Larson - 2.

Confirmed.

#### **STEPP, SECRETARY CATHY**

Of Madison, as Secretary of the Department of Natural Resources, to serve for the term ending at the pleasure of the Governor.

The question was: Confirmation?

The ayes and noes were required and the vote was: ayes, 17; noes, 13; absent or not voting, 2; as follows:

Ayes - Senators Cowles, Farrow, S. Fitzgerald, Gudex, Harsdorf, Lasee, Lazich, LeMahieu, Marklein, Moulton, Nass, Olsen, Petrowski, Roth, L. Taylor, Tiffany and Vukmir - 17.

Noes - Senators Bewley, Carpenter, Erpenbach, Hansen, Harris Dodd, Lassa, Miller, Ringhand, Risser, Shilling, Vinehout, Wanggaard and Wirch - 13.

Absent or not voting - Senators Darling and C. Larson - 2.

Confirmed.

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### **CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS, RESOLUTIONS, AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS NOT REQUIRING A THIRD READING**

#### **Senate Joint Resolution 5**

Relating to: honoring the life and public service of David Earl Paulson.

Read.

Adopted by unanimous rising vote.

Senator Fitzgerald, with unanimous consent, asked that all members of the Senate be added as coauthors of **Senate Joint Resolution 5**.

#### **Senate Joint Resolution 6**

Relating to: the public service of Laura Rose.

Read.

The question was: Adoption of **Senate Joint Resolution 6**?

The ayes and noes were demanded and the vote was: ayes, 30; noes, 0; absent or not voting, 2; as follows:

Ayes - Senators Bewley, Carpenter, Cowles, Erpenbach, Farrow, S. Fitzgerald, Gudex, Hansen, Harris Dodd, Harsdorf, Lasee, Lassa, Lazich, LeMahieu, Marklein, Miller, Moulton, Nass, Olsen, Petrowski, Ringhand, Risser, Roth, Shilling, L. Taylor, Tiffany, Vinehout, Vukmir, Wanggaard and Wirch - 30.

Noes - None.

Absent or not voting - Senators Darling and C. Larson - 2.

Adopted.

Senator Shilling, with unanimous consent, asked that all members of the Senate be added as coauthors of **Senate Joint Resolution 6**.

#### **Senate Joint Resolution 7**

Relating to: the life and service of Annette Polly Williams.

Read.

Senator Vukmir, with unanimous consent, asked that all members of the Senate be added as coauthors of **Senate Joint Resolution 7**.

Adopted by unanimous rising vote.

Senator Fitzgerald, with unanimous consent, asked that all action be immediately messaged to the Assembly:

**Senate Joint Resolution 5**  
**Senate Joint Resolution 6**  
**Senate Joint Resolution 7**

Messaged.

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## SECOND READING AND AMENDMENTS OF SENATE JOINT RESOLUTIONS AND SENATE BILLS

### Senate Bill 6

Relating to: Legislative Audit Bureau access to documents maintained by state agencies and authorizing the Government Accountability Board to provide investigatory records to the Legislative Audit Bureau.

Read a second time.

Ordered to a third reading.

Senator Fitzgerald, with unanimous consent, asked that the rules be suspended and the bill be given its third reading.

### Senate Bill 6

Read a third time and passed.

Senator Fitzgerald, with unanimous consent, asked that all action be immediately messaged to the Assembly:

### Senate Bill 6

Messaged.

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS, ADJOURNMENT HONORS, AND REMARKS UNDER SPECIAL PRIVILEGE

Senator Vukmir, with unanimous consent, asked that when the Senate adjourns, it do so in honor of Peggy Troy. On January 1, 2015, Peggy was elected as chairman of the Children's Hospital Association Board of Trustees, who are the voice of more than 220 children's hospitals across the country. Peggy has spent 40 years in the health care industry. She has witnessed the trends and changes in health care and the impact they have had on how children's hospitals address the health care needs of their patients. Peggy earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Marquette University in 1974 and a master's in Nursing from DePaul University in Chicago. While still attending Marquette, her first nursing job was serving as a nurse intern at Children's Hospital of Wisconsin. Peggy served as executive vice president and COO of Methodist Le Bonheur Healthcare and president and CEO of Le Bonheur Children's Medical Center, both in Memphis, and president of Cook Children's Medical Center in Ft. Worth. In January of 2009, she returned to Children's

Hospital of Wisconsin as the President and CEO. She has served on the national board of Children's Hospital Association and is regularly invited to Washington, D.C. to meet with public and elected officials regarding pediatric health care policy. Peggy is also a member of the Greater Milwaukee Committee and serves as a director on the boards of Marquette University, the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce, Blood Center of Wisconsin, Teach America and the Wisconsin Hospital Association. As the Chairman of the Children's Hospital Association Board of Trustees, Peggy will have the opportunity to further advocate for all children in order to protect, improve and advocate for the health of our country's children. She says she never imagined doing anything other than working with kids. She doesn't know of any profession that could be more satisfying and her entire career has been focused on this passion. Congratulations Peggy Troy, for an entire career spent on improving the lives and health care of our children.

Senator Taylor, with unanimous consent, asked that when the Senate adjourns, it do so in honor of Black History Month.

Senator Wanggaard, with unanimous consent, asked that when the Senate adjourns, it do so in honor of Kevin Cronin, who passed away Sunday after a courageous battle with pancreatic cancer. Kevin was one of the most selfless volunteers that Wisconsin politics has ever seen. When Senator Wanggaard first ran for the State Senate, Kevin was one of his biggest supporters. Many of his colleagues from southeast Wisconsin can say the same thing. Every day he came into the office and Kevin would be there, working tirelessly, making phone calls and always making everyone around him laugh. Whether it was the County Fair, Chocolatefest, Fall Fest, Lincoln Day Dinners, or county caucuses, Kevin was there giving his time and all of his effort to fight for what he believed in. He didn't just work hard in politics, but also in his daily life. He was an employee at Case-New Holland, a job that he loved. He would never turn down extra hours and prided himself on his work ethic. Kevin also served his country and state in the Wisconsin Army National Guard. Kevin had his share of ups and downs, but despite the challenges, he faced his cancer diagnosis head on, always positive and always smiling right up until the end. He was respectful and kind to everyone regardless of where you stood in politics, unless you dissed his beloved Chicago Bears, then he would have some "choice" words for you. A few years ago Kevin posted this status on Facebook after making it through some hard times, and I think it's fitting for how he lived his life. He said, "When one door closes, another door opens. Tomorrow starts the next chapter in the life and times of Kevin Cronin. I rode the storm out." And ride the storm out he did. As one of his close friends said, "he rode out of here on a big white lion of a blizzard." Thank you for your dedication and service, Kevin. You will truly be missed.

Senator Marklein, with unanimous consent, asked that when the Senate adjourns, it do so in honor of Jamie Nutter, superintendent of Fennimore Schools. Jamie was named 2015 Superintendent of the Year by Wisconsin Association of School District Administration.

Senator Carpenter, with unanimous consent, asked that when the Senate adjourns, it do so in honor of his constituents who attended his Town Halls on January 31, 2015. Their civic participation and engagement in the issues of the day continues to be an inspiration to Senator Carpenter.

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President Lazich appointed Senator Vukmir and Senator Taylor to escort his Excellency, the Governor, to the Joint Convention.

Senator Fitzgerald, with unanimous consent, asked that the Senate recess until 6:45 P.M. for the purpose of awaiting the Governor's Budget Address in Joint Convention in the Assembly Chambers at 7:00 P.M., and further, that the Senate stand adjourned, pursuant to **Senate Joint Resolution 1**, upon the rising of the Joint Convention.

3:07 P.M.

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## RECESS

The Senate proceeded in a body to the Assembly Chamber to meet in Joint Convention to receive the Budget Address.

6:45 P.M.

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## IN ASSEMBLY CHAMBER IN JOINT CONVENTION

Senate President Lazich in the chair.

The Committee to wait upon the Governor appeared with his Excellency the Honorable Governor Scott Walker, who delivered his message as follows:

7:00 P.M.

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"Speaker Vos, Speaker Pro Tem August, President Lazich, Majority Leader Fitzgerald, Minority Leader Shilling, Minority Leader Barca, members of the Wisconsin Supreme Court, Constitutional Officers, tribal leaders, members of the Cabinet, distinguished guests, members of the Legislature, most importantly, fellow citizens of the great state of Wisconsin, it is an honor to appear before you tonight.

Before we get started, I would like to introduce the First Lady of Wisconsin, my wife, Tonette. Next to my wife is the Adjutant General of the Wisconsin National Guard, Major General Donald Dunbar. Next to him are Brigadier General Mark Anderson and Command Sergeant Major Bradley Shields.

As a kid growing up in Delavan, I started working as a dishwasher at the Countryside Restaurant. Later, I went on to flip burgers at McDonald's to save up for school. My mom was a part-time secretary and she raised my brother and me,

while my dad served as a pastor in our small town.

We didn't have much money, but the best thing my parents gave us was an understanding of the value of hard work. Mom was raised on a farm where they didn't have indoor plumbing until she went to junior high school. My dad's dad worked as a machinist at a factory for most of his life.

More than anything, my family ingrained in me the idea that anyone who worked hard could go as far as their dreams would take them. It was through their eyes that I got my first glimpse of the American Dream.

Today, however, I worry that too many of our fellow citizens feel that dream has become out of reach for them and their families. The budget plan we present tonight will help restore that America Dream right here in Wisconsin.

Our plan is based on growth and opportunity—which leads to freedom and prosperity for all. Secondly, our plan will use common sense reforms to create a government that is limited in scope and—ultimately—more effective, more efficient, and more accountable to the public. And finally, our plan will ensure a state where people are safe and sound in their homes and throughout their communities.

Our Freedom and Prosperity proposal is built to help working families like the VanDrisses from Pound—a small town in northeastern Wisconsin. Ken is a truck driver and Kelly works in maintenance. Like Tonette and me, they have two sons.

Trevor is studying to be a diesel mechanic in the John Deere Ag Tech program at the technical college here in town and he also works for the local dealership in Pound. Tanner is studying business communications at the University of Wisconsin in Marinette. The VanDrisses are here with us tonight.

Last year, the VanDrisses were happy to see their property tax bill go down. In fact, largely because of our reforms and the flexibility we gave to local governments, property taxes on a typical home in Wisconsin are \$131 less this year than they were in 2010.

Tonight, I am proud to say that our state budget will continue those reforms, so the property tax bill on a typical home will be even lower during the next two years. Just as I promised, property taxes by the end of 2016 will be lower than they were in 2014. That means lower property taxes for 6 years in a row.

Our budget will continue the tuition freeze for undergraduates from Wisconsin at each of the UW system campuses. And we will add a tuition freeze in our technical colleges for high demand areas. That's good news for students, like Tanner and Trevor.

In addition to helping working families and students, this budget will assist small businesses and farmers, as well as senior citizens. That's good news for people, like James Booker from Plymouth.

In December, I received a note from Mr. Booker that read:

*"Dear Gov Walker,*

*I want to thank you! I am 68 years old and have owned various homes in Wisconsin since I was 20 years old. This is the first time that I have ever received a substantial reduction in the Property Tax! I have been very angry at Wisconsin for a number of years due to the huge property tax compared to other States and have been planning on selling our home and moving to a low tax State. We have had our home up for sale for a year and took it off the market for the winter. Now I plan on not re-listing in the spring and will wait to see what happens with Wisconsin property taxes."*

Well, thank you Mr. Booker for the nice message. I'm glad to tell you that our budget will continue the property tax relief—which will make it easier for people like you to stay in Wisconsin.

And that's just some of the really good news happening in our state these days.

Last week, the federal government reported November was the best month for private sector job creation that we've had in Wisconsin since 1990. For that month, we rank 5th in the country and 1st in the Midwest for private sector job growth. We want that trend to continue as we grow the economy.

To help, our budget will merge two of our state entities that work on economic and housing issues into one highly effective organization called the Forward Wisconsin Development Authority. And the budget will add further investments into the successful Wisconsin Fast Forward program that helps people get the skills they need to succeed through technical college courses, apprenticeships, and training programs—as well as working on ways to help our military veterans find employment or even start a business of their own.

These effective worker training programs are actually economic development efforts. So many of our employers are looking for qualified workers. Increasing the ability to fill these positions will encourage employers to add more work—which obviously will lead to more jobs.

Maintaining a strong infrastructure system is another positive way to grow the economy—not only for the people who design, build, and maintain it—but because it is key to commerce in this state.

Under our Freedom and Prosperity proposal, we are investing in our transportation system, expanding broadband access, and continuing to improve the quality of health care throughout the state.

We want to grow the economy in cities, towns, and villages across Wisconsin—while not growing the size of state government.

To do more with less, we found more ways to reform government.

As I mentioned in our State of the State address, we propose that several agencies be merged and various programs be consolidated to provide better service to the customer, as well as better value to the taxpayers.

Here's a good example: for years, supporters of the University of Wisconsin system said freeing them of being directly under the state government bureaucracy would help reduce costs in multiple areas for the system. This budget includes a bold proposal to provide new governance through an authority, similar to the one used for the UW Hospital and Clinics.

Recently, some have raised concerns about this proposed reform. These are some of the same claims we heard four years ago when our Act 10 reforms were enacted. Today, our graduation rates are higher, third grade reading scores are better, and Wisconsin ACT scores are second best in the country.

With this in mind, I ask the legislature to give our bold reform idea a serious look. As the father of a UW student, I have a real interest in the success of our state system and I believe this will make the University of Wisconsin stronger in the years to come.

And speaking of education, our budget will increase state support for schools by providing more than \$100 million annually for the school levy tax credit and more than \$100 million in the second year of the budget for equalization aids—while maintaining revenue limits to ensure continuing property tax relief.

To help the needs of rural schools, we will provide additional aid for transportation and other costs. Thanks to Representative Rob Swearingen and other members of the Speaker's Task Force on Rural Schools for their leadership on this issue.

Overall, we want to provide the best education possible for every child in this state. For many, like my sons and me, it will be a traditional public school. For other families, it will be in a successful charter, private, virtual, or home school environment.

One of those families involves a wonderful mom named Dina Lein. Last year, I had an opportunity to meet Dina and her family in Appleton. She told me about how her son was in a local public school a few years ago, but it just wasn't working for him.

Back then, his grades were low, he was being bullied, and he didn't like school very much. Thankfully, Dina's family was one of the first to sign up for the school choice expansion after the last budget.

Dina introduced me to her family and I was thrilled to hear that her son Trace is now loving 6th grade. He's in the band and plays football. And his school scores have improved—dramatically. Dina and her husband, Michael, are here tonight along with their children—Coleton, Trace, and Alexxis.

Today, I am excited to announce our plans to lift the cap on vouchers so more families, like Dina's, can have the choice to find the best school for their children. Every child deserves the chance to succeed.

And every parent deserves the ability to see objective and comparable data about their child's school. Our budget includes the tools to provide that information to every parent

for any school that receives public funds. You see, I trust parents. Give them the facts and they will act in the best interest of their children.

In addition, our budget removes funding for the Smarter Balanced test, which is connected to Common Core. We also include legal language making it clear that no school district in the state has to use these standards, which are set by people from outside the state.

I want high standards—and those decisions should be made by school board members and parents and others at the local level.

Our reforms will also improve programs that provide assistance to people in times of need. Here in Wisconsin, we help folks facing financial challenges. For those who are able, however, these programs should be a temporary safety net—not a hammock.

With this in mind, our budget expands the requirement for able-bodied adults to be enrolled in an employment and training program in order to receive food stamps. Now, some might claim that we're making it harder to get government assistance. We're not. We're making it easier to get a job.

The next step is to require able-bodied adults without children to pass a drug test in order to get a welfare check. For those who fail, we will provide treatment, so we can help them get off of drugs.

Why are we doing this? Well, because we know that we can get people jobs. Each week, employers tell me that they have positions available—they just need individuals who can show up for work and who can pass a drug test.

Think about it, as of this afternoon, there were more than 72,000 job openings posted on our state website. We need more people to fill these jobs.

We want to help transition people from government dependence to true independence through the dignity of work. This will bring security to both taxpayers and—more importantly—to those who ultimately are able to take charge of their lives.

Overall, our Freedom and Prosperity proposal provides greater security for people all across Wisconsin.

This budget provides renewed financial security as it is balanced and the rainy day fund is the largest in state history—165 times bigger than when I first took office. Our retirement system is the only one fully funded in the country and our bond rating is strong.

In my predecessor's last budget, the total bonding level was \$3.6 billion. In this budget, the total level of bonding is

down to less than \$1.6 billion. This is the lowest it has been in a decade.

Security for our citizens is just as important. In this budget, we put more than \$600 million into Medicaid to provide health care for needy families, children, and seniors. Through our bold reforms, among the states that did not take the Obamacare expansion, we are the only state in the nation without a gap in coverage, according to the respected Kaiser Family Foundation.

Beyond Medicaid, we provide additional funds for programs that help victims of domestic violence and their families. Some of our partners in the fight against Domestic Violence are here with us tonight:

Patti Seger is the executive director of End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin. Teri Jendusa Nicolai is a domestic violence survivor, from Waterford. Roseanne Barber of Hayward is a member of the Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians, a survivor, and a longtime advocate for victims. Melissa Torres is a survivor of domestic violence from Madison. And Jessica Honish is an experienced domestic violence victim advocate who works at the Rainbow House in Marinette. Places like Rainbow House benefit from our investments in the fight against domestic violence.

In this budget, we also continue to improve mental health services in the state, provide more funds to help the victims of child sex trafficking, and maintain support for successful crime fighting programs, like ShotSpotter, to fight gun violence.

Earlier tonight, I introduced you to the VanDrisses. Our Freedom and Prosperity proposal is designed to help families like theirs. Our budget helps keep their property taxes down and their son's tuition frozen. Our budget reforms government, so we operate in a way that is more effective, more efficient, and more accountable.

And our budget provides more security to people like them all over the state.

Thank you. May God bless you. May God bless and protect our brave men and women in uniform. And may God continue to bless the great State of Wisconsin."

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## ADJOURNMENT

The Joint Convention arose.

7:30 P.M.